United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/561
9 January 1990

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ United Nations Secretary-General terms "essential" the entering of the Middle East parties into an "effective negotiating process leading to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace", speaking at the initial meeting this year of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

+ The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Elections in Nicaragua, Elliot Richardson, arrives tomorrow in Managua to meet with the President of the Supreme Electoral Council of that country and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

+ The new Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations presents his credentials to the Secretary-General.

+ The Secretary-General plans to travel to Moscow this weekend to address the Global Forum on Environment and Development (15-17 January) and to meet with President Gorbachev and other Soviet leaders.

+ Trusteeship Council authorizes dispatch of five-member mission to Palau to observe plebiscite.

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Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar this morning commended the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People "for the vital role it continues to play in the efforts of the United Nations to reach a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine".

In a statement made at the Committee's first meeting this year, the Secretary-General said the Committee resumed its work "with a mandate renewed by a decision of the General Assembly, supported by an overwhelming majority of the Member States and in the context of continuing international efforts to bring the parties to the negotiating table".

(more)

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The intifadah, the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territory, which had now entered into its third year, "remained a matter of serious concern", he said, and its message that the occupation would continue to be rejected and that the Palestinian people would remain committed to their right of self-determination was "direct and unequivocal".

In his opinion, it was "imperative that a way must be found, and soon, to begin an effective negotiating process that can restore hope in the possibility that a just and durable peace can be attained".

He expressed regret at the lack of progress made in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict, and called on the international community to make a "fully concerted and well co-ordinated effort" to help the parties enter into an effective negotiating process that would lead to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People began its work today by considering a work programme calling for intensified efforts to promote the early convening of a peace conference on the Middle East.

Under the proposed work programme, which was referred to a working group for further study, the Committee would hold seminars in Africa, Europe and North America, in addition to a Latin American and Caribbean symposium which had been deferred from 1989 and would now be scheduled to take place on 5 to 9 February in Buenos Aires.

Absa Claude Diallo of Senegal, who was re-elected Chairman, said the results achieved by the Committee in the past year were significant, but must be strengthened. It was clear that convening an international peace conference would be one of the surest ways of achieving peace in the region, she said.

Zuhdi Labib Terzi, observer for Palestine, expressed the hope that 1990 would see the solution of the Palestinian question. While he was impressed by the results achieved in resolving a number of conflicts in the world, he was concerned that obstacles remained in connection with the conflict in the Middle East. He had more confidence in the work of the Secretary-General and the United Nations, particularly in mobilizing world public opinion on the rights of Palestinians.

* * *

The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Elections in Nicaragua, Elliot Richardson, will arrive in Managua tomorrow (10 January) to meet with the President and members of the Supreme Electoral Council and the Presidents of the Regional Electoral Councils, presidential candidates, religious and civil personalities and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

(more)

During his visit, which ends on 16 January, Mr. Richardson will review the evolution of the electoral process in Nicaragua, particularly the conduct of the electoral campaign by political parties and the preparations for the voting process on 25 February.

* * *

The new Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations, Eduardo Vallarino, today presented his credentials to Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar.

Mr. Vallarino is Chairman of the Board of several chemical, agro-industrial and shipping companies in Panama, Peru, El Salvador and the Bahamas, and is Vice-President of Investigación y Desarrollo, an economic consulting firm. From 1982 to 1989, he served as Vice-Chairman of the Panamanian Human Rights Committee.

At the end of last year, the newly installed President of Panama, Guillermo Endara, had requested that Mr. Vallarino be accepted as the legitimate representative of Panama and as such be allowed to address the Security Council and the General Assembly on the situation in Panama and Central America. At the time, the Spokesman for the Secretary-General said that neither Mr. Vallarino nor the other Panamanian envoy claiming to represent former General Noriega's Government possessed the proper credentials to do so.

* * *

Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar will travel to Moscow this weekend to address a Global Forum on Environment and Development (15-17 January), and to meet with General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and other Soviet leaders.

According to his Spokesman, the agenda of the Secretary-General had not been fixed in advance and the Secretary-General would leave it to the Soviet leaders to raise whatever matters they wished to discuss.

The Spokesman also confirmed that consultations were "going on" regarding the Secretary-General's initiative on Afghanistan, and that high-level United Nations officials would be accompanying the Secretary-General on his trip to Moscow.

* * *

The Trusteeship Council has decided to send a five-member visiting mission to Palau to observe the 6 February plebiscite in that Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

The Council took this action by adopting, by a vote of 4 in favour (China, France, United Kingdom, United States) to 1 against (Soviet Union), a resolution authorizing the dispatch of the five-member mission to observe the referendum on the proposed Compact of Free Association with the United States.

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The mission is to consist of representatives of China, Fiji, France, Papua New Guinea and the United Kingdom. They will monitor the polling arrangements, casting of votes, closure of voting, ballot counting and the declaration of the voting results.

Under the Compact of Free Association, defence and security responsibilities would be accorded to the United States, which is also required to furnish economic assistance to Palau once it becomes autonomous.

Explaining his vote on the text, the Soviet representative said it was not true that the people of Palau were exercising their right of self-determination. Rather, the plebiscite served to justify the Administering Authority's indefensible policies, which were impeding self-determination.

Speaking under the right of reply, the representative of the United States said the Soviet comments were irrelevant to the issue. The visiting mission's purpose was to confirm that the people of Palau were freely determining their own future. He regretted that the Soviet representative had "distorted the issue in so anachronistic a manner".

The Territory, with Palau as the westernmost group of islands, is one of the original -- and the last of the -- 11 Trust Territories under the International Trusteeship System and was designated a "strategic area" under the United Nations Charter. Because of its special status, the Trusteeship Council reports annually to the Security Council about conditions there.

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READEX FICHE

United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/562
10 January 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ United Nations spokesman says United Nations is ready to undertake tasks with regard to peace settlement in Cambodia if requested by the Security Council, but that meeting on subject next Monday in Paris between five permanent members of Security Council is not being held under United Nations auspices.

+ Secretary-General asks Security Council to extend mandate of temporary detachment of United Nations military officers to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

+ World Food Programme announces it will provide emergency food aid worth almost $8 million to Ethiopian drought victims and refugees, and over $8 million more in aid to victims of natural and man-made disasters in six other countries.

+ 1989 annual report of International Narcotics Control Board says illicit production and abuse of drugs, together with drug-related violence, has reached a "new and dangerous stage".

* * *

The five permanent members of the Security Council will meet in Paris Monday (15 January) to discuss ways to bring about peace in Cambodia.

According to the Secretary-General's Spokesman, China, France, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and the United States will debate the idea of a United Nations trusteeship in Cambodia. The Spokesman made it clear that the conference in Paris was not under United Nations auspices, but that the United Nations was ready to undertake tasks with regard to Cambodia if requested by the Security Council.

At the meeting, the five Governments will give special attention to an Australian plan to put Cambodia under a temporary United Nations

(more)

For information media—not an official record

administration, pending free elections, a plan which would be similar to the recent United Nations operation in Namibia.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar has asked the Security Council to extend the mandate of the temporary detachment of United Nations military officers to Afghanistan and Pakistan. A United Nations peace-keeping unit has been involved in that area since 1988, pursuant to a Security Council resolution on the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In a letter requesting extension of the mandate, the Secretary-General said that he had indicated in a report last year to the Security Council that more still needed to be done for the implementation of the Geneva Accords there.

He said he had drawn the attention of the parties, as well as the guarantors, to the need to ensure the scrupulous implementation of the obligations they had entered into by signing the Geneva Accords. He added that he had already consulted the parties to those Accords, and that the concurrence of the countries supplying the military personnel had also been secured.

* * *

The World Food Programme (WFP) has announced that it would provide emergency food aid worth almost $8 million to Ethiopian drought victims and refugees, and over $8 million more in aid to victims of natural and man-made disasters in six other countries.

Tons of wheat will be shipped to Ethiopia to help meet the needs of over 400,000 drought victims in northern Eritrea and Tigray provinces, and to help feed some 350,000 Somalian refugees there.

Fifty-thousand Mauritanian refugees will receive tons of food, including powdered milk, canned fish and sugar.

Earthquake victims in Algeria, estimated to total nearly 20,000, will receive shipments of wheat flour, butter oil and mixed vegetables, while about 92,000 displaced persons in Angola will be provided with vegetable oil.

To help meet the needs of Mozambicans affected by food shortages and civil strife, WFP will send tons of maize, vegetable oil, sugar and beef.

Another shipment of food will go to Mauritania to over 100,000 Mauritanians repatriated from Senegal, and tons of maize, beans and vegetable oil will be sent to El Salvador to help feed about 50,000 Salvadorans affected by civil strife.

* * *

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According to the 1989 annual report of the United Nations International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), released in Geneva today, the war to defeat drug-trafficking organizations must be waged globally since success of the internationally organized illicit drug operations in any one country would endanger the security and integrity of the entire international community.

The Board called on countries where consumption of illicit drugs is widespread to enact vigorous measures to contain and reduce demand.

In assessing the world-wide situation, the Board said that illicit production and abuse of drugs, together with drug-related violence, had reached a "new and dangerous stage". Ever more ruthless, trafficking organizations had defied unprecedented counteraction by the world community and were threatening to paralyse the political institutions and economies of a number of countries.

Reducing the illicit demand for drugs was essential for any improvement in the overall drug-trafficking situation, the report stated. The Board, therefore, attached great importance to the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, to be held in London in April.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/563
12 January 1990

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ United Nations Spokesman confirms both the Government of El Salvador and the national liberation army of El Salvador (FMLN) have requested that United Nations Secretary-General mediate peace talks between the parties. Preparations for visit by the President of El Salvador to United Nations Headquarters under way.

+ Security Council extended yesterday (11 January) mandate of United Nations military officers to Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) for a further period of two months.

+ Lebanese letter to Secretary-General asks for extension of UNIFIL mandate, expiring on 31 January, for a further six-month period.

* * *

The national liberation army of El Salvador (FMLN) has accepted a Government proposal to ask Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar to mediate peace talks.

The Secretary-General's Spokesman confirmed today that "mediation has been requested between the Government and the Front by both sides" and that the United Nations was working on the possibility of a visit by the President of El Salvador to United Nations Headquarters.

The Spokesman said he understood that President Cristiani would be in the United States from 16 to 24 January, and that during that time, the President would have a meeting with the Secretary-General which had been requested by the mission of El Salvador and by the Secretary-General.

The announcement comes after a meeting two days ago between the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Central America, Alvaro de Soto, and senior United States officials.

Mr. de Soto also met yesterday (11 January) with members of the FMLN. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss all aspects of the Central American issue, including the role of United Nations missions in the region, and the

(more)

For information media—not an official record

recent request made by the five Central American Presidents to the Secretary-General to promote the resumption of peace talks between the Government of El Salvador and the FMLN.

The war in El Salvador has been continuing over the last 10 years and, according to reports, has claimed about 70,000 lives.

* * *

The Security Council yesterday (11 January) agreed unanimously to extend the mandate of the detachment of United Nations military officers to Afghanistan and Pakistan for a further period of two months.

The Council confirmed its agreement to measures envisaged by the Secretary-General in extending the temporary detachment, made up of 40 military officers from 10 countries.

Known as the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP), the detachment was created to monitor the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, as well as other aspects of the Agreements of the Settlement of the Situation relating to Afghanistan, which were concluded at Geneva two years ago.

The Secretary-General had indicated in a report last year to the Council that more still needed to be done for the implementation of the Geneva Accords in that area.

The Council also requested the Secretary-General to keep it informed of "further developments in accordance with the Geneva Agreements".

* * *

The Lebanese Government has decided to ask the Security Council to extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which expires on 31 January, for a further six-month period.

In a letter to the Secretary-General, the Lebanese Government said Israel's continued occupation of "the so-called security zone and its aggressive and arbitrary practices against the region and its inhabitants" strengthened its conviction that the Force should remain to ensure Israel's "immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Lebanese territory".

It further said that the renewal of the UNIFIL mandate was "indeed of special significance" at a time when the new constitutionally elected Government, with the support of the international community, had started to extend the legal authority on all the Lebanese territory.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/564
15 January 1990

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General addresses Global Forum of Environment and Development for Survival in Moscow.

+ Leaders of the two sides in Cyprus invited by Secretary-General to come to New York for sustained talks beginning 12 February.

+ Personal Representative of Secretary-General for Elections in Nicaragua, meets with President Daniel Ortega, winding up his second official visit to Nicaragua late last night.

* * *

Terming the improved political climate a "gratifying change" and mentioning that the vision and the new thinking had been articulated with clarity and courage, especially by the leadership of the Soviet Union, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar addressed in Moscow today the Global Forum on Environment and Development for Survival.

In his key-note address to the Forum, he emphasized that the approach called for required a fundamental change in attitude. To achieve that change, it was necessary "to draw upon not only the intellectual but also the spiritual resources of the world community".

Speaking on the fourth anniversary of Mikhail Gorbachev's statement setting out a programme for universal security through disarmament, the Secretary-General mentioned steps for achieving a genuine, stable peace.

First, he said, the peace process needed to be sustained and expanded in order to cover other areas of "stubborn regional conflicts". Second, the principle of collective security, which was the heart and soul of the United Nations Charter, needed to become the ruling concept of all policies bearing on international peace.

Finally, he said, it was necessary to act on the realization that "security had economic and social dimensions no less demanding of attention than its political and military ones".

(more)

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He stressed that in all these respects, the role of the United Nations will become far more pivotal than it had been in the past.

He went on to say that the great challenge that needed to be met at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, scheduled for June 1992 in Brazil, was to find ways of assimilating in the development process the environmental concerns that were shared by all.

The two major ingredients of a global solution, he concluded, seemed to be, first, the availability of ecologically sound technologies in developing countries and, second, significant changes in patterns of production and consumption which had proved damaging.

The Secretary-General also had talks today with Foreign Minister Shevadnadze about the situation in Afghanistan and Cambodia. Tomorrow, he is scheduled to to meet with President Gorbachev.

* * *

The Secretary-General has invited the leaders of the two sides in Cyprus to come to New York for sustained talks beginning 12 February.

A United Nations spokesman said today that the Secretary-General had come to the conclusion that the most appropriate way of proceeding with the ongoing effort was through direct talks.

Since August 1988, the Secretary-General has met four times with the leaders of the two sides in Cyprus for joint talks to discuss ways to bring about peace in the area.

* * *

Elliot Richardson, Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for the Elections in Nicaragua, wound up his second official visit to Nicaragua late last night, following a three-hour meeting with President Daniel Ortega.

Although he reported an overall favourable impression of the electoral process, he said that certain elements remained a source of concern, including media coverage and content, the use of State property for propaganda purposes, and the continuing armed conflict in certain regions of the country. In addition, the speedy release of foreign funds to the opposition alliance to enable them to post polling officers on election day remained an issue.

Elections are scheduled to take place 25 February.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/565
16 January 1990

. . TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General, on the second day of his visit to Moscow, discusses the international situation with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

+ Thorvald Stoltenberg, former Norwegian Foreign Minister and Permanent Representative, assumes office in Geneva as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; appoints Douglas Stafford, a United States national, to the position of Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees.

+ Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole for the Preparation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade began its third substantive session yesterday.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, on the second day of his visit to Moscow, discussed the international situation today with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

At the meeting, the Secretary-General expressed the gratitude of the United Nations for the strong support given by the Soviet Union to all the efforts of the Organization in the political and social fields, as well as to its peace-keeping responsibilities. They reviewed the present international situation, with special emphasis on the situation in Afghanistan, and discussed ways and means of enhancing the role the United Nations in the preservation of peace and security in the world on the basis of the proposals put forward by President Gorbachev to the General Assembly two years ago.

Tomorrow, the Secretary-General will meet with representatives of the Moscow church and of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Links with Foreign Countries, before leaving Moscow.

* * *

Thorvald Stoltenberg, the former Norwegian Foreign Minister and Permanent Representative, arrived in Geneva today to assume office as United Nations

(more)

For information media—not an official record

High Commissioner for Refugees. He was elected High Commissioner by the General Assembly in November last year.

After consultations with the Secretary-General, Mr. Stoltenberg has appointed Douglas Stafford, a national of the United States, to the position of Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees.

Mr. Stafford was formerly Deputy Assistant Administrator at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in New York, where he served as head of the Bureau for Finance and Administration. He is taking up his new functions as of today.

* * *

The Committee to prepare the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade has begun its third substantive session by adopting the outline regarding issues to be addressed in the strategy.

Among the issues to be discussed, as recommended by the General Assembly last year, are development efforts during the 1990s, which would address questions such as external debt, international trade and commodities, technology, food and agricultural policies, environment and eradication of poverty and hunger.

Speaking in his capacity as Chairman of the "Group of 77" developing countries, the representative of Bolivia said the Group attached great importance to the new development strategy. In addition, operational machinery must be identified.

On behalf of the European Community, the representative of Ireland welcomed the consensus adoption of the outline. In that regard, the Community was ready to begin work on elaboration of the strategy at this session.

The Committee was established by the General Assembly two years ago and a report of the Secretary-General concluded that the strategy for the 1990s should focus on a limited set of realistic and essential objectives and that it should be appropriate to the new setting of the world economy.

The Committee decided to suspend the discussion on the subject and to resume at the end of March to allow time for delegations to prepare to address all sections of the outline.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/566
17 January 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council fails this morning to adopt draft resolution concerning search of residence of Ambassador of Nicaragua in Panama by United States military, due to veto by United States.

+ Secretary-General welcomes outcome of meeting on Cambodia held in Paris by five permanent members of Security Council, terming it "important" in search for a solution to Cambodian problem.

* * *

The Security Council failed this morning to adopt a draft resolution concerning the search of the residence of the Ambassador of Nicaragua in Panama by United States military forces.

The resolution, vetoed by the United States, would have had the Council declare that the serious events that took place were, as had been acknowledged, "a violation of the privileges and immunities recognized under international law and codified in the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Relations".

The meeting was requested by the Government of Nicaragua following the "temporary occupation by force" of the Nicaraguan Ambassador's residence in Panama City by United States troops during the United States intervention in Panama last December.

Thirteen of the Council's 15 members voted in favour of the draft, which was submitted this morning by Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Ethiopia, Malaysia and Zaire; the United Kingdom abstained.

In explaining his Government's position, Alejandro Serrano Caldera, of Nicaragua, said the entry and search of the residence of the Nicaraguan Amabassador in Panama on 29 December 1989 violated international law and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

He demanded an investigation into the incident and said that penalties against the United States Government should be set by the legal and international means available under international law.

Thomas Pickering, of the United States, said the convening of a Security Council meeting on the subject was not necessary. There was no threat to peace and security, and the insistence of Nicaragua on the meeting was an effort to turn the Council into a propaganda exercise.

Mr. Pickering went on to say that the United States fully supported and abided by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. The incident at the Nicaraguan Amabassador's residence, he said, had already been officially handled. A formal note had been sent to the Nicaraguan Government, and President Bush had made a public statement of regret.

Before the vote, the representative of the United Kingdom said his Government would abstain from voting because the incident was not appropriate for action by the Security Council. While any breach of diplomatic law was a source of concern, he said the United States had already addressed the situation at the highest level.

Canada and Finland, after the vote, said they had voted for the resolution out of respect for international law.

* * *

Secretay-General Javier Perez de Cuellar has welcomed the outcome of the meeting on Cambodia held in Paris this week (15-16 January) by the five permanent members of the Security Council, according to a statement issued by a spokeswoman at Headquarters today.

In the statement, he said he had always been convinced that "the Five can play an important role in the search for a solution to this problem".

He further stated that he had taken note with interest of the role foreseen for the United Nations in the settlement of the Cambodian problem. He said this was "another sign of the growing confidence" in the capacity of the Organization to discharge its functions effectively as a mechanism for the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

He reiterated the United Nations' willingness to assume in Cambodia "any appropriate role" which was agreed upon by all parties concerned and approved by the Security Council. In this connection, he continued, it was essential to ensure that the mandate which might ultimately be entrusted to the United Nations was "well-defined, realistic and practicable", and that the Organization be assured of the necessary resources for its effective implementation.

He said he intended to continue the efforts he had made, in the framework of his good offices, to facilitate progress towards a negotiated settlement and thus bring about "an end to the suffering that the Cambodian people have endured for so long".

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/567
18 January 1990

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs arrives in Beirut, beginning his visit to Lebanon before renewal of mandate of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

+ Economic and Social Council begins first part of its organizational session for the year; elects Chinmaya Rajaninath Gharekhan, of India, as President.

+ Sweden contributes more than $21 million this year to United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

* * *

United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs Marrack Goulding arrived in Beirut today, beginning his visit to Lebanon, before the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

A spokesman of the Under-Secretary-General said Mr. Goulding first met with the President of Lebanon, Elias Hrawi, then with the Prime Minister and the Secretary-General of the Foreign Ministry.

During his meetings, Mr. Goulding discussed the renewal of UNIFIL's mandate, the situation in south Lebanon and the efforts of the Lebanese Government to implement the Security Council's resolution about the situation in that area.

Tomorrow Mr. Goulding will visit the UNIFIL units.

* * *

The Economic and Social Council has elected Chinmaya Rajaninath Gharekhan, of India, as President for 1990, as it began the first part of its organizational session for the year.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Mr. Gharekhan, a lawyer who joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1958 as diplomat and Ambassador, has served at the United Nations since October 1986. During that time, he has held positions as Vice-Chairman of the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council studying the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social fields, Chairman of the Commission on Transnational Corporations, and Vice-President of the United Nations Council for Namibia.

In his opening statement, Mr. Gharekhan said the Council was meeting "during a period of momentous international developments". It was important to give the Organization "comprehensiveness, impact and productivity", in order to revitalize United Nations activity in the economic and social fields.

He said the Council must keep in mind the state of the world economy, particularly the conditions prevailing in the developing countries, which as a whole had witnessed stagnation or slow growth throughout the last decade, notwithstanding growth in a few countries.

Furthermore, he said, the changes taking place in Eastern Europe and the greater integration of those countries into the world economy would have significant implications for international economic co-operation. Also, the reduction of political tensions and the move towards disarmament should release additional resources that could be deployed for purposes of development.

A statement was also made by the outgoing President, Kjeld Mortensen of Denmark, who said that, more than ever, the United Nations was faced with the twofold task of meeting the new challenges in the economic and social fields, while at the same time maintaining and strengthening international co-operation towards solving the important existing problems.

To succeed in meeting that challenge in the years to come, he said, the intergovernmental structure of the United Nations and its secretariat in the economic and social fields must be more effective and efficient.

* * *

Sweden has announced that it is contributing more than $21 million this year to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

This makes Sweden the second largest contributor to the Agency's regular budget for 1990, after the United States.

Of the amount, nearly $6 million is designated for the Agency's programmes in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, where it provides services and assistance to nearly 900,000 Palestine refugees.

Expressing satisfaction at the latest Swedish contribution, UNRWA Commissioner-General Giorgio Giacomelli said it demonstrated an awareness of the difficulties faced by the Agency in trying to run its normal education,

health and welfare programmes from the regular budget and special operations in Lebanon and the occupied territory out of a special emergency budget.

The UNRWA depends on voluntary contributions from donor Governments and international bodies for the funding of both regular and emergency programmes. The Agency has so far received pledges totalling some $210 million, $20 million short of its total budget for 1990. The $36 million emergency budget for Lebanon and the occupied territory is still largely unfunded.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/568
22 January 1990

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General appoints Benon Sevan as his representative on the implementation of the Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan and Johannes J. Manz as his Special Representative for the Western Sahara.

+ As Special Committee on Decolonization begins 1990 session, Secretary-General expresses his appreciation in statement to the Committee.

+ Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women begins session, by examining reports of 11 States parties.

+ New Permanent Representative of Nigeria presents credentials to the Secretary-General.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar last Friday appointed Benon Sevan as his Representative on the implementation of the Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan.

According to a United Nations spokesman, Mr. Sevan will continue his current duties as Personal Representative of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan and Pakistan which he has been performing since May 1989.

She said Mr. Sevan was taking over Diego Cordovez's functions in the context of the Geneva Agreements.

* * *

The Secretary-General also appointed last Friday, Johannes J. Manz, a national of Switzerland, as Special Representative for the Western Sahara. He replaces Hector Gros Espiell of Uruguay.

Mr. Manz, who holds a Doctorate in international public law, entered the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland in 1969, and was currently Director of Administration and External Services for Switzerland

(more)

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with the rank of Ambassador. Over the years, he has held a number of high positions in the Swiss diplomatic service.

* * *

The Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar expressed his appreciation today to the Committee on decolonization, as it began its 1990 session.

In his statement, he said that the work of the Special Committee would assume particular importance this year because the United Nations would be commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption by the General Assembly of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

He said that the success of the Declaration could be measured by the fact that since 1962, 45 independent Territories had been able to exercise their right to self-determination. Today, only 19 remained on the Committee's list of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

It was an encouraging fact, he said, that as the Committee began its deliberations, one of those Territories -- Namibia -- had reached the final stage leading to independence.

He said that he was "sure that the experience gained by the United Nations in Namibia will be of value in other similar situations".

Calling attention to the question of Western Sahara, he said that this was one of the major concerns of the Committee. In that respect, he said that he was "encouraged" by the consensus resolution adopted by the General Assembly last December.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women began its ninth session this morning.

At the session, which is scheduled to conclude on 2 February, the Committee will examine the measures taken by a number of States to improve the status of women in socio-economic and political fields.

Scheduled for consideration are the initial reports of the Federal Republic of Germany, Malawi, Peru, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom and United Republic of Tanzania, and the second periodic reports of Canada, Egypt, Mexico, Mongolia and Ukraine.

Addressing the opening meeting, Margaret Anstee, Director-General of the United Nations Office in Vienna and Head of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, said that at the tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, also called the "Magna Carta for Women", its implementation was one of "few really bright spots in what is often a picture of loss of momentum for the advancement of women".

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The Committee was established in 1979 to monitor what States parties to the Convention were doing to ensure equal rights for women in all fields. As of December 1989, 100 States were party to the Convention.

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Ibrahim Agboola Gambari, the new Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations, presented his credentials today to the Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar. He is replacing Joseph N. Garba, who is President of the current General Assembly.

Mr. Gambari, a former professor at Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Nigeria, was a member of his country's delegation to the United Nations in 1982, and served as Director-General of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs from 1983 to 1984.

Mr. Gambari was Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria from 1984 to 1985.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/569
26 January 1990

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Convention on Rights of the Child signed by representatives of 60 Governments in special ceremony at United Nations Headquarters.

+ Governing Council of International Fund for Agricultural Development ends its thirteenth session in Rome, approving a number of low-interest loans for farming and fishing projects in developing countries.

+ Commission on Narcotic Drugs to begin its one-week special session in Vienna on Monday, in preparation for General Assembly's special session on drugs, 20-23 February.

* * *

Sixty countries signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child today in a signing ceremony at United Nations Headquarters.

Opening the ceremony, Jan Martenson, Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights, said the Convention was an encouraging expression of the international community's faith in the future and pledge to continue to strive for a more humane world.

He also cited a number of problems affecting children, including the fact that 100 million children had been abandoned by their families and left on the streets to fend for themselves, often resorting to petty crime, prostitution or begging; 50 million children around the world are forced to work under inhumane working conditions; and 3.5 million die each year from preventable diseases. Mr. Martenson said it was "all too evident" from the list just how far the world community had yet to go to make the world fit for children.

He said the Convention could only be as successful as countries, institutions and individuals were willing to make it, and concluded by quoting Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar that it was time to move on to make the principles embodied in the Convention a reality for every living child.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The 54-article Convention was adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November last year and is the first comprehensive and binding human rights instrument solely addressing the rights of children.

* * *

The Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), ending its thirteenth session in Rome today, approved a number of low-interest loans for farming and fishing projects in developing countries.

The President of IFAD, Idriss Jazairy, and a representative of Nigeria signed a loan of nearly $20 million to revitalize fishing villages in the south-eastern part of that country. The project is expected to raise the incomes and improve the living conditions of an estimated 240,000 impoverished fisherfolk who live in small isolated communities in the coastal mangrove swamps of Nigeria.

Another loan was approved for a credit and export promotion project in Zimbabwe to provide subsistence farmers with the assistance they need to grow more food and earn more income. The project is directed exclusively at farmers in communal areas where a third of those families are headed by women. The $15 million IFAD loan represents under 10 per cent of the total project cost of nearly $120 million which is being jointly financed by the World Bank, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, and the Governments of Japan and New Zealand.

Angola received its first loan from IFAD for over $7 million to help small farming families, returning to Angola after the civil war, to develop improved varieties of crops such as cassava, maize and sorghum.

Also Niger and Nepal, both with loans of $13 million, and the Gambia received loans just approved by IFAD.

* * *

The United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs will hold a one-week special session in Vienna starting on Monday.

Practical steps, including the establishment of an international data base on drug financial transactions, as well as the proclamation of a United Nations decade against drug abuse, will be considered as the Commission considers a global strategy against illicit drugs.

The main focus will be to prepare for the upcoming General Assembly special session on international co-operation against illicit drugs, to be

(more)

held in New York from 20 to 23 February, which will outline a series of practical measures for countries and international organizations to adopt to fight drug abuse and trafficking.

Ideas being considered include expanded rural development programmes for drug-producing areas in developing countries, increased attention to curbing the rising demand for drugs and increased involvement of international financial institutions in the fight to counteract the negative social and economic consequences of the drug problem.

The General Assembly last year adopted a resolution declaring that action against drug abuse and illicit production and trafficking should be accorded the highest possible priority by the international community, and that the United Nations should be the main focus for concerted action against illicit drugs.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/570
29 January 1990

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General recommends in report to the Security Council that the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) be extended for a further period of six months, until 31 July 1990.

+ United Nations Human Rights Commission begins forty-sixth session in Geneva.

+ United Nations visiting mission leaves Headquarters for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands to observe plebiscite on 6 February in Palau, concerning Compact of Free Association between the United States and Palau.

* * *

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) remained unable to implement the mandate given to it by the Security Council, namely, to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory, according to a report by Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar on UNIFIL.

He recommends in the report that the Security Council accept the request by the Lebanese Government to extend the mandate of UNIFIL for a further period of six months, until 31 July 1990.

The Secretary-General said that the current mandate period had seen a further strengthening of Israeli control over the southern part of Lebanon, with significant consequences for the daily life of the civilian population.

The last six months had, however, also seen "positive developments on the wider Lebanese scene", the Secretary-General said. The Security Council had welcomed the election of Elias Hrawi as President of the Lebanese Republic and the appointment of the Lebanese Government led by Prime Minister Salim Al Hoss, and had expressed its support for President Hrawi's efforts in implementation of the Taif Agreement to deploy Lebanese Government forces to restore central government authority over all Lebanese territory.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The Secretary-General then emphasized that he was "deeply dismayed" that in spite of persistent efforts -- in particular those of Marrack Goulding, Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs, who had visited the region last week -- it had not so far been possible to ascertain the fate of Colonel William Higgins.

UNIFIL's financial situation also remained grave, the Secretary-General said. The total of unpaid assessments had again increased and amounted now to some $318 million, which was equivalent to the budget of the Force for over two years at the current rate of expenditure.

* * *

The question of human rights violations in southern Africa will be the main subject of the session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, which began work today in Geneva.

During the session, which ends on 9 March, the Commission will consider a wide range of questions relating to the protection and promotion of human rights on the basis of reports of the Working Groups of Experts established by the Commission in 1967.

The Commission has before it reports on the question of Namibia and on the adverse consequences for the enjoyment of human rights of political, military, and economic assistance given to the colonial and racist regime in southern Africa.

The Commission will also consider a number of questions concerning violations of human rights in Chile, southern Lebanon, Iran, Afghanistan, El Salvador, Colombia, Albania, Romania, China and in the territories occupied by Israel.

Under yet another agenda item, the Commission will address itself to questions on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The 43-nation Commission is the principal body of the United Nations concerned with the protection and promotion of human rights. It meets once a year to examine the specific situations of human rights violations and to strengthen the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms by adopting various measures, including the elaboration of new international standards in human rights.

* * *

A United Nations visiting mission left Headquarters today for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands to observe a plebiscite in Palau, scheduled for 6 February, on the Compact of Free Association between the United States and Palau.

(more)

The visiting mission, which will spend about 10 days in Palau, will be composed of Yongshou Lu (China), Isikia Rabici Savua (Fiji), Louis Amigues (France), Samuel Pulup (Papua New Guinea) and Stephen Smith (United Kingdom). The mission will be accompanied by four members of the United Nations Secretariat.

The decision to send a visiting mission to Palau was made by the Trusteeship Council on 8 January, by a vote of 4 in favour (China, France, United Kingdom, United States) to 1 against (Soviet Union).

Of the original 11 Territories under the Trusteeship System, Micronesia is the only one to have been designated a "strategic area" under the United Nations Charter.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/571
30 January 1990

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Commission on Narcotic Drugs, continuing its special session in Vienna, proposed yesterday a new United Nations body to work exclusively towards elimination of demand for illicit drugs; placed six "designer drugs" and four psychotropic substances under strict international controls.

+ Preliminary overview for 1989 of economy of Latin America and the Caribbean presented by Executive Secretary of Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gert Rosenthal, today at Headquarters.

+ United Nations Spokesman says "a misunderstanding" between the Secretary-General and United States Vice-President Quayle on topic of human rights in Cuba seems to have arisen.

* * *

A new United Nations body to work exclusively towards the elimination of the demand for illicit drugs was proposed yesterday (29 January), as the meeting of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs continued its special session.

Among the speakers, Francisco Ramos-Galino, Director of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, told the Commission that it could consider recommending to the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly on international co-operation against narcotic drugs, to be held at Headquarters at the end of next month (20-23 February), the establishment of a sub-commission to deal with the elimination of demand. It could also consider ways the Division could be strengthened in order to cope with the increase demands being placed on it.

Opening the session, Margaret J. Anstee, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Co-ordinator of United Nations Drug-related Activities, said that since the Commission last met, the looming threat of escalating drug abuse and illicit trafficking in drugs had attained even more horrifying proportions. It had reached unprecedented heights of terror with the assassination, in Colombia, of the presidential candidate, Luis Carlos Galan.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

One of the purposes of the system-wide plan of action was to pinpoint the resource gap, she stated. The vexing question of resources would inevitably be a central issue of the Commission and at the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly.

The newly elected Chairman, Edward A. Babayan (Soviet Union), said the new approach in international relations stressed more mutual co-operation. He also said he was not pessimistic about international efforts against drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

He said the Soviet Union had recently signed agreements to combat drugs with the United Kingdom, France, the United States and Canada. It was doing preliminary work towards ratifying the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychtropic Substances, and he hoped that its provisions would be implemented as soon as possible.

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs then took action by approving a series of World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations on the control of chemicals which, if abused, are detrimental to health.

It placed a group of six "designer drugs" -- all analogues of fenatyl -- under strict international controls, and also voted to place controls on four psychotropic substances.

The Commission went on to discuss the scheduling of drugs, which means placing drugs which may be abused under international controls.

Many speakers pointed out that new research had shown that some drugs presently controlled under the two Conventions in force had new applications. They stressed that use of those drugs to help alleviate the suffering of patients should be of primary consideration.

The Commission then rejected a WHO recommendation that controls on the anti-nausea drug, dronabinol, be loosened.

During its one-week session, scheduled to conclude on 2 February, the Commission will focus on preparations for the upcoming special session of the General Assembly against narcotic drugs, assess the trends in drug abuse and measures to reduce illicit demand, and steps taken to implement provisionally the 1988 Convention.

* * *

As the new decade begins, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean face severe economic conditions. The average per capita product is more than 8 per cent below that of 10 years ago, and the countries have had to bear huge social costs, according to a recent report by the United Nations. Most of the countries continue to struggle with inflation or seek to consolidate their stabilization efforts against a backdrop of economic hardship.

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The report issued by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) states that in 1989 the average per capita product of the region declined for the second year in a row, falling back to the level registered in 1977-1978, before the debt crisis. At the same time, average inflation surged again for the third year running, almost reaching the level of 1,000 per cent for the first time in the history of the region.

The report states that the general setting of stagnation and high inflation in which the region operated was largely determined by the transfer of financial resources abroad -- a phenomenon it called characteristic of this decade -- which amounted in 1989 to some $25 billion. Due to inflation and shaky external positions, the number of countries which were obliged to give up fully servicing their external debt increased in 1989. Indeed, these countries included -- for the first time together -- three of the four biggest debtors (Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela).

In these circumstances, most of the countries of the region continue to display a complex syndrome of structural imbalances, fiscal deficits and low levels of investment, according to the report.

Inflation has presented itself as an eloquent example of the fatigue caused by the debt crisis. At the end of November 1989, the 12-month figures for inflation had broken new records -- in Argentina, nearly 4,000 per cent; Peru, nearly 3,000 per cent; and Brazil, close to 1,500 per cent. Nicaragua, however, which had registered a rate of inflation of over 30,000 per cent in 1988, managed to bring this down to 3,500 per cent, thanks to a drastic stabilization programme.

The report said that these extraordinarily high rates of inflation were largely due to the inability to control the public deficit, aggravated in some cases by the growing financial burden of high real interest rates on the domestic debt, together with uncertainty about future economic trends and runs on foreign exchange.

Only five of the 19 countries, for which up-to-date information is available, serviced their debt in full and on time; the other 14 built up still larger arrears during 1989.

Gert Rosenthal, Executive Secretary of ECLAC, said at a press conference today at Headquarters that the United States had been the most progressive in terms of overall assistance to the region in the past, but that the Nordic countries were now in the forefront on a per capita basis. He said that debt reduction was "the way to go" for Latin America, and that the Latin American Governments had to diversify their economies. In addition, he said, legislation was needed to change bank rules on debt reduction because, as it stood now, it was not an attractive option for the banks.

* * *

A United Nations spokesman said today that a misunderstanding appeared to have arisen, when Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar and United States

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Vice-President Dan Quayle met at Headquarters last December and discussed, among other things, the topic of human rights in Cuba.

The spokesman was referring to an article in The New York Times today in which it was said that Vice-President Quayle had protested against what he termed "a refusal" by the Secretary-General to submit a report on rights abuses by Cuba to the Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

The spokesman said the Vice-President, on the occasion of the meeting, had anticipated that the Secretary-General would make a report on the human rights situation in Cuba. The Secretary-General replied at the meeting that he had not been authorized as such to make a report, but that he could do so if a specific country requested it.

What the Secretary-General meant, the spokesman said, was that if a country wanted a report or a statement from him in a particular body, then it had to address a request to this effect to that body. Apparently, what the United States side understood was that the Secretary-General would act upon a letter addressed to him.

The spokesman further said the position of the Secretary-General was that, in keeping with constant practice, any member of the Commission was entitled to receive a written report on the direct contacts and how these were maintained with the Government of Cuba. Should a request be approved by the Commission, then he would be in a position to furnish such a report.

According to the spokesman, the Commission does not request a report by the Secretary-General. The Commission, however, says that it has decided "to welcome the willingness of the Government of Cuba to co-operate with the Secretary-General in maintaining direct contacts on the issues", and that "these contacts and their results" will be taken up by the Secretary-General "in an appropriate manner".

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/572
31 January 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council votes unanimously to renew mandate of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon for another six months.

+ Human Rights Commission meeting in Geneva begins consideration of the violation of human rights in occupied Arab territories, including Palestine.

+ Joint press conference held at Headquarters by Administrator of UNDP, President of World Bank, Executive Director of UNICEF and Director-General of UNESCO in advance of "World Conference on Education for All", scheduled for Thailand in early March.

+ President Alfredo Felix Christiani-Burkard of El Salvador visits Headquarters to confer with Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

* * *

The Security Council voted unanimously today to extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for another six months, until 31 July.

In a report to the Council, the Secretary-General said UNIFIL's difficulties had not eased during the reporting period and that it "remained unable to extend its area of operation to the Israel-Lebanon armistice line", as envisaged in a Security Council resolution of 1978.

Under the Council's mandate, UNIFIL was to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and to assist the Government of Lebanon in reasserting its authority over the southern part of the country.

The Secretary-General said in the report that UNIFIL's financial situation remained grave and that unpaid assessments for the Force's operations now totalled $318 million, which was owed to troop-contributing countries by the Organization.

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For information media—not an official record

The Human Rights Commission, continuing its session in Geneva, has begun consideration of the question of the violation of human rights in occupied Arab territories, including Palestine.

Jan Martenson, Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights, in his introductory statement, said that since the start of the Palestinian uprising two years ago and in view of the tragic development which led to a further deterioration of the human rights situation, United Nations organs had stressed, in particular, the need to initiate urgent measures to improve the human rights of the peoples under occupation.

Concerning the situation in occupied Palestine, the Commission had reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination without external interference and the establishment of a sovereign State on their national soil, Mr. Martenson said.

The Commission had also reiterated its condemnation of the persistent occurrence of gross and flagrant violations of human rights in Kampuchea. He added that the Commission had decided to keep the situation in Kampuchea under review as a matter of high priority at the present session.

Concerning the situation in southern Africa, Mr. Martenson said the Commission had reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the people of Namibia. It had also reaffirmed the legitimacy of the struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa and its national liberation movement by all available means, including armed struggle, for the elimination of the apartheid system and the exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of South Africa.

Representatives of Palestine, Syria, Jordan, Bangladesh, Kuwait and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania expressed their views during the discussion.

It was announced that the Special Rapporteur on a mission to Iran had returned today and would present his tentative findings to the Commission.

The Chairman of the Commission then read out a letter sent by Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar concerning the report on the human rights situation in Cuba. The Secretary-General in his letter said that on 9 March last year, the Commission adopted a decision saying that the Commission had decided "to welcome the willingness of the Government of Cuba to co-operate with the Secretary-General in maintaining their direct contacts on the issues and questions contained in the report; those contacts and their results will be taken up by the Secretary-General in an appropriate manner". The Secretary-General informed the Commission that, in accordance with that decision, he had been maintaining, over the last 10 months, ongoing contacts, both written and oral, with the Cuban Government on the matter.

* * *

At a press conference today at Headquarters, William Draper III, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), speaking on behalf of the four sponsors of the conference, Barber B. Conable, President of

the World Bank, James P. Grant, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and Frederico Mayor, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), said the majority of children who do not have access to an education are female. In sub-Saharan Africa, he said, "the literacy rate of men is a mere 34 per cent, but the rate of women is only half of that, an appalling 17 per cent".

Mr. Draper said more than 100 million children in the world did not have access to schooling and that expanding primary education for all children would cost some $40-50 billion over the coming decade. To combat that problem and to help erase illiteracy, he said, a world conference will be held in Jomtien, Thailand, from 5-9 March.

The conference is expected to adopt a world declaration on education for all and a framework for action to meet basic learning needs in the 1990s. The four agencies stressed that countries were the focus of the conference. "It is not the international agencies but countries themselves that must recognize the challenge, mobilize internal and external resources and rally public and private organizations to meet the challenge."

The agencies said the conference had already gained strong financial sponsorship from 20 partners, including Governments and international, regional and non-governmental organizations.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/573
1 February 1990

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General expresses satisfaction at outcome of meeting with President Alfredo Cristiani of El Salvador and announces that he will redouble his efforts to reopen the dialogue between the Salvadorian Government and the national liberation front, FMLN.

+ Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna circulates draft resolution calling on General Assembly to consider all aspects of drug problem.

+ Secretary-General announces appointment of Alister McIntyre as his Personal Representative for the controversy between Guyana and Venezuela.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar has announced that he would redouble his efforts to facilitate the re-opening of dialogue between the Salvadorian Government and the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). The announcement came after a meeting yesterday at Headquarters between the Secretary-General and President Alfredo Felix Cristiani of El Salvador.

The Secretary-General expressed his satisfaction at the outcome of the meeting and what he called "the beginning of a very constructive and important dialogue between the Salvadorian people". He said "this is a Salvadorian problem that must be solved by its people".

The Secretary-General said that both he and President Cristiani had agreed that "as soon as possible steps must be taken" to facilitate the resumption of the dialogue between the Government of El Salvador and FMLN.

"President Cristiani, in following the mandate of Security Council resolution 637, has agreed to the good offices of the United Nations Secretary-General with the purpose of advancing this dialogue until its conclusion, which I hope would be a negotiated solution of the internal problems of El Salvador."

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The first step towards reopening the dialogue was taken today with the announcement that Alvaro de Soto, Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central American peace process, was headed to Mexico City to meet with representatives of FMLN.

* * *

Measures to reduce demand for illicit drugs, reduce supply, suppress illicit trafficking, treat and rehabilitate addicts and address the financial aspects of the illegal drug trade would be recommended by the General Assembly under a draft resolution that was circulated in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs meeting yesterday (31 January) in Vienna.

Under the draft, sponsored by the 12 member States of the European Community, the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly would also urge States to complement and reinforce an enhanced role for the United Nations.

The representative of Austria proposed that a new international convention on reduction of demand for illicit drugs be developed.

The representative of Colombia said States that bore the brunt of the struggle against drug abuse should be financially compensated by developed countries. The Colombian representative said his Government's commitment to combating drug trafficking and abuse was unconditional. The financial power of the drug traffickers in his country was massive, and they posed a threat to the institutions of Colombian society. Colombia was not a society of criminals, but a victim of the demand for illicit drugs in the developed societies.

The representative of the United States said United Nations drug bodies must be invited to participate in the General Assembly's special session, and adequate funds must be made available to implement the global programme of action. The United Nations could play an important role in facilitating bilateral and multilateral exchange of information to assure that narcotics traffickers were separated from their drug profits.

As the Commission continued its discussion, a number of speakers praised the strength and determination of the Colombian struggle against drugs and drug traffickers, led by President Virgilio Barco Vargas. They said nations should look at the root causes of drug abuse instead of just treating the symptoms.

The special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs is to be held in New York, from 20 to 23 February.

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Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar announced today the appointment of Alister McIntyre as his Personal Representative for the controversy between Guyana and Venezuela.

The responsibilities entrusted to Mr. McIntyre relate to the Geneva Agreement of February 1966, whereby both Governments agreed that their border dispute, the question of Essiguibo, a territory given in 1899 to Guyana, should be referred to the Secretary-General. The Presidents of Guyana and Venezuela recently announced that they now agreed that the means of settlement should be the Secretary-General's good offices.

Mr. McIntyre has been Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, Jamaica, since 1 September 1988. From May 1987 to August 1988, he was Assistant Secretary-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation of the United Nations. Mr. McIntyre was Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for five years from August 1982.

He was officer-in-charge of UNCTAD during 1985, and served as Director of the Commodities Division in UNCTAD from 1977 to 1980.

Mr. McIntyre served from 1963 to 1977 in various capacities for universities and economic institutes and commissions in the West Indies and Latin America.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/574
2 February 1990

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General says he is "greatly encouraged" by speech made by President De Klerk of South Africa, concerning apartheid. The President of General Assembly also welcomes the address.

+ Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights concludes session in Geneva discussing the right to adequate housing.

+ Arab Group at United Nations expresses concern over Soviet-Jewish immigration to Israel.

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Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said he was "greatly encouraged" by the speech made by South African President F.W. De Klerk at the opening of the South African Parliament today. He said that this was "a promising beginning to a process which I hope will lead to the dismantling of apartheid and the building of a non-racial democracy in which all the citizens of South Africa, regardless of race or colour, will be able to participate fully, a system which would ensure justice and equality for all".

The President of the General Assembly, Joseph N. Garba (Nigeria), also welcomed the announcement by the South African President to lift the ban on the African National Congress and the impending release of Nelson Mandela. He said he was "certain that Mr. Mandela's release and his participation in the negotiating process will be a catalyst for further changes that would lead to a peaceful non-racial and democratic South Africa".

Mr. Garba also said, however, that apartheid still remained intact, and he called for the "maintenance of pressure against the South African regime and continued support for the opponents of apartheid, until apartheid is completely dismantled".

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The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, concluding its session today in Geneva, discussed the right to adequate housing.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The condition of human settlements, particularly in developing countries, has worsened in recent years, despite efforts by Governments and by the poor themselves. Within the next 15 years, the urban population of developing countries is expected to double, and roughly 1 billion new urban dwellers, most of them poor, will be crowding into cities already strained to the limit.

Addressing the session, the representative of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) said his agency had been designated by a General Assembly resolution to act as the secretariat for the Global Strategy for Shelter for the Year 2000. The Centre had prepared a plan of action for 1989-1991 for the implementation of the Global Shelter Strategy adopted by the Commission on Human Settlements. Habitat would soon be starting a series of seminars to disseminate that Strategy to promote the formulation of national shelter strategies to reflect the Global Strategy.

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The Arab Group at the United Nations expressed deep concern today about the increased flow of Soviet-Jewish immigration to Israel, terming it "a serious development".

At a United Nations press conference, Clovis Maksoud, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States, said regional and international peace would be "endangered by any spillover of Soviet-Jewish emigration to the illegal Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab territories.

In view of the "global dimension and renewed threats" of Soviet-Jewish immigration, the Arab Group had decided to establish a follow-up committee and make the necessary recommendations for whatever action was necessary within the framework of the United Nations.

Mr. Maksoud said the access of Soviet Jews to those settlements would not only tend to beef up the illegal settlements, but would also constitute a potential for the pre-empting of the rights of the Palestinians to their independent state.

The Israeli authorities had stated that they did not encourage Soviet Jews to settle in the settlements, but that did not rule out the right of access, the Ambassador said.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/575
5 February 1990

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar "deplores" loss of life and "condemns strongly" acts of violence in attack on a tourist bus in Cairo, yesterday.

+ Security Council holds consultations on a Cuban charge of an attack on a Cuban merchant ship in the Gulf of Mexico by a vessel of the United States' Coast Guard on 31 January.

+ Third report of the United Nations Observers for the Verification of the Elections in Nicaragua (ONUVEN) states that continuing military activity and reports of intimidation are "seriously affecting" the electoral process in that country.

+ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concludes its ninth annual session (2 February), and adopts report to the General Assembly.

+ United Nations Latin American and Caribbean Seminar and NGO Symposium, organized by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, begins in Buenos Aires.

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The attack yesterday on a tourist bus near Cairo in which many Israeli civilians were killed, and many more wounded, has been strongly condemned by Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar. He said "it is particularly deplorable that this incident should have occurred at a time when a major effort is being made to promote the peace process through dialogue and understanding".

According to press reports, eight Israelis were killed and 17 wounded yesterday when armed assailants attacked the tour bus carrying a group of Israeli academics and their wives on their way from Rafah, on Egypt's border with the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip, to Cairo. The identity of the attackers remains unknown.

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For information media—not an official record

The Security Council held consultations today at the request of the Cuban Government which alleged that a Cuban merchant ship in the Gulf of Mexico had been attacked by a vessel of the United States Coast Guard on 31 January.

The Cuban authorities, in a letter to the Council President, said that the merchant ship "Herman", leased by a Cuban firm and with a 12-member Cuban crew on board, was en route from Cuba to Mexico. Cuba called the attack by the United States Coast Guard a "violation" of the norms of international law and of the rules governing peaceful coexistence between States.

In a letter addressed to the Secretary-General, United States authorities said its Coast Guard cutter requested permission to board and inspect the Cuban vessel, as there was reason to suspect it was carrying "narcotics or other contraband".

The Coast Guard subsequently confirmed the vessel's Panamanian registry and obtained permission from the Government of Panama to board and inspect the vessel, in accordance with international maritime law and procedures, the letter stated.

After pursuing the "Herman" all night in international waters, the Coast Guard fired small-caliber rounds at the vessel's engines in an attempt to disable it. According to the United States letter, the "Herman" still ignored orders to stop and proceeded into Mexican territorial waters.

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Continuing military activity and an increase in the number of reports of intimidation are seriously affecting the electoral process in Nicaragua, according to the most recent report of the United Nations Observers for the Verification of the Elections in Nicaragua (ONUVEN).

ONUVEN's third report to the Secretary-General, covering the period from the beginning of the electoral campaign in early December to the end of January, states that "the main characteristic of the period covered by this report was the massive increase in complaints of acts of intimidation, threats, harassment, attacks on and arrests of candidates, poll watchers and even voters". Most of the complaints lodged by the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN) concerned military activities attributed to the Nicaraguan resistance. According to the report, the leaders of the resistance, however, have denied any involvement in the incidents, insisting that their soldiers have orders not to initiate offensive military action.

Complaints by the opposition party (UNO) concern threats of physical aggression, loss of employment, damage to property, or threatening letters or telephone calls.

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The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, concluding its ninth annual session last Friday (2 February), proposed the mounting of media, education and arts campaigns to promote the eradication of the traditional practice of female circumcision.

The Committee took this action by adopting its report to the General Assembly, which also recommended steps to counter acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) among women and children. The recommendations apply to the 101 States parties to the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

In its proposal on female circumcision, the Committee also recommended that States parties include in their national health policies appropriate strategies aimed at eradicating the practice, including the "special responsibility" of health personnel to explain its harmful effects.

The recommendation on AIDS urged the intensification of public information campaigns on that epidemic, especially as it affected women and children. It also recommended that the Convention's States parties recognize that women are particularly vulnerable to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection because of their reproductive role and subordinate position in society, and further recommended an expanded role for women in providing AIDS health and education services to the public.

Recommendations on improving the conditions of unpaid women workers and recognition of unpaid work in the gross national product (GNP) were deferred by the Committee until its next session.

At this year's two-week session, which began on 22 January, initial reports were presented by the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Republic of Tanzania, Malawi, the United Kingdom, Thailand, Peru and Turkey. The Ukraine, Mexico, Mongolia, Egypt and Canada presented their second periodic reports.

The Committee also proposed that next year's session be held from 21 January to 1 February 1991 in Vienna.

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The inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People will be the general theme of a United Nations Latin American and Caribbean Seminar and NGO Symposium, the first of its kind in that region, beginning in Buenos Aires today.

Organized by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the five-day seminar will cover such questions as the urgency of convening an international peace conference on the Middle East, the intifadah in the occupied Palestinian territory, the role of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in the socio-cultural development of the Palestinian people and the promotional activities by non-governmental organizations for the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

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United Nations

Press Release

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ The Conference on Disarmament begins its 1990 session in Geneva.

+ Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights concludes fourth session (Friday, 2 February) in Geneva, adopting its draft report to the Economic and Social Council.

+ Commission on Narcotic Drugs concludes its eleventh special session (Friday, 2 February) in Vienna, calling for a strengthening of United Nations drug control organs.

+ United Nations Seminar and first Latin American and Caribbean Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Symposium on the Question of Palestine hears renewed calls for international peace conference on the Middle East under United Nations auspices.

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As the Conference on Disarmament began its 1990 session today in Geneva, Miljan Komatina, the Secretary-General's Personal Representative to the Conference, delivered a message from Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar.

In his message, the Secretary-General said "new opportunities are now offered for the pursuit of more meaningful measures in the field of arms limitations and disarmament". He cited the implementation of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Nuclear Missiles (INF Treaty) and the momentum in the strategic arms reduction talks (START) negotiations as significant signs of progress.

He said the wide spectrum of bilateral and multilateral negotiations under way generated hope that the current trend would become irreversible, allowing the process of disarmament to proceed at a faster pace.

He stressed the importance of an early conclusion of a multilateral agreement on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons, the prevention of nuclear war, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the ending of all nuclear-test explosions. A complete ban on such tests could

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"pave the way to nuclear disarmament and rid the world of the nuclear menace", the Secretary-General said.

The General Assembly last year reaffirmed the role of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community. The Conference was urged to intensify further its work on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and on their destruction.

The mandate of the Conference on Disarmament is to promote the attainment of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

The Conference consists of the five nuclear-weapon States (China, France, Soviet Union, United Kingdom and United States) and members of other militarily significant States, as well as neutral and non-aligned countries which form the Group of 21 States. Non-members have been invited, at their request, to participate in the work of the Conference.

At its 1989 session, the Conference reaffirmed the decision that its membership might be increased by not more than four States.

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The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights concluded its fourth session on Friday, 2 February, by adopting its draft report to the Economic and Social Council.

During its three-week session, which began on 15 January, the Committee examined reports submitted by seven States parties -- Cyprus, Mexico, Philippines, Jamaica, Colombia, India and Argentina.

On the basis of its consideration of those reports, the Committee adopted a number of observations and recommendations to the Council, including, draft decisions, general comments and reporting guidelines for States parties.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights provides under its articles that each State party undertakes to take steps to ensure equal rights to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights.

During its session, the Committee encouraged greater attention to be given to efforts to promote economic, social and cultural rights within the framework the United Nations and its agencies.

The Committee proposed that the appropriate United Nations organs and agencies specifically recognize the intimate relationship which should be established between development activities and efforts to promote respect for human rights in general. In that regard, it noted the failure of each of the first three United Nations Development Decade Strategies to recognize that relationship and urged that the fourth such strategy, to be adopted in 1990, should rectify that omission.

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The Commission received proposals for the elaboration of a convention on reduction of demand for illicit drugs and the establishment of a new United Nations body to work on that topic.

It also discussed regional co-operation in drug law enforcement and entry into force and provisional application of the 1988 Convention against Drug Trafficking.

The main focus of discussions of the five-day special session, which began on 29 January, was the preparation of recommendations for the upcoming special session of the General Assembly on international co-operation against illicit drugs, to be held in New York from 20 to 23 February.

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The United Nations Seminar and first Latin American and Caribbean Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Symposium on the Question of Palestine opened yesterday with renewed calls for an international peace conference on the Middle East under United Nations auspices, with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council and all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), on an equal footing.

The Seminar was opened by its Chairman, Oscar Oramas-Oliva of Cuba, who is also a Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. He said the General Assembly's reaffirmation last year of its call for the speedy convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, by an unprecedented majority, was not in itself enough. The current situation in that territory challenged not only the statesmanship but also the sense of humanity and compassion of those who were trying to end the diplomatic impasse concerning the conflict.

He said the Committee deeply regretted that the Government of Israel had so far not responded positively to the peace initiative or recognized the legitimacy of Palestinians' rights. An encouraging note, however, was the significant increase in participation by Israeli non-governmental organizations and individuals, including well-known personalities from the mainstream of Israeli politics, in seminars and meetings for non-governmental organizations organized by the Committee.

Among the other opening statements, Naseem Mirza, Chief of the United Nations Division for Palestinian Rights, reading a message from the Secretary-General to the Seminar, said the convening of the meeting indicated the importance the United Nations attached to solving the Palestine problem, which formed the root cause of the Middle East conflict. The sustained participation of Latin Americans in efforts to accelerate the peace process in the Middle East would be a significant factor in achieving a comprehensive solution.

A matter which had been of particular concern to the Committee in the examination of the reports of States parties during the session was the adverse impact of the debt burden on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights in many countries.

As of yesterday, the closing date of the session of the Committee, there were 94 States parties to the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The fifth session of the Committee is expected to take place in Geneva from 26 November to 14 December.

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The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, concluding its eleventh special session on Friday, 2 February, called for a strengthening of United Nations drug control organs and their secretariats in a manner commensurate with intensified national efforts and intergovernmental co-operation in the fight against illicit drugs.

In a consensus statement, the Commission indicated that all United Nations bodies in the field of narcotics and drug control needed to be reviewed and assessed in order to identify alternative structural possibilities that would result in the establishment of a stronger, more efficient United Nations drug control structure.

It also called for additional financial resources to support programmes that had a direct impact on field situations. As the achievement of the objective embodied in the conventions was, by necessity, a long-term affair, structural financial commitments were most desirable, it added.

The Commission regretted that it had not been possible, due to lack of time, to reach a consensus on a series of measures which, taken as a whole, could serve as comments on the draft global plan of action.

In the course of its session, the Commission adopted a number of resolutions. Under a resolution on support to Colombia, the Commission invited Governments to consider urgently how they might contribute to a programme of effective measures to assist the Colombian Government.

By another, it strongly appealed to all States to intensify measures aimed at the early ratification of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

Ten draft resolutions were adopted at the recommendation of the Sub-Commission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East. These texts call, among other things, for measures to reduce drug consumption among young people in the Near and Middle East; countermeasures against illicit drug trafficking; linkage of a computer network between law enforcement authorities; exchange of drug liaison officers; and eradication of illicit crops.

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He said the Secretary-General's regret at the lack of progress in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict was all the greater, given the significant steps taken towards resolution of other disputes. It was essential that a concerted and well co-ordinated effort be made by the international community to help the parties enter into effective negotiations.

Reading out a message from Yassir Arafat, PLO Chairman, an observer for Palestine said that among the goals Palestinians were seeking through the present intifadah was the right to establish an independent state with its capital at Jerusalem.

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